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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
1ST BRIGADE, 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION (M)
FORT RILEY, KANSAS 66442

18 November 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR Soldiers and Leaders of the 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division (M)

SUBJECT: Command Philosophy

1. I am proud to be a member of the Devil Brigade, "The Oldest Brigade in the United States Army". This unit has a long and distinguished history of professionalism that has set the standard for others to follow. This legacy gives us ability to accomplish all assigned tasks--for there is **No Mission Too Difficult**. Let me share with you some basic principles that will guide me as I serve as your commander. In the absence of orders --this is my intent:

a) Always treat others, as you would want to be treated. Professional Soldiering is people business. Take care of the soldiers in your charge and take care of one another. Challenge yourself and your subordinates to be the very best at what you do. Set achievable goals, reward success, fix mistakes and always lead from the front.

b) Prepare your unit for Combat. We are an Army at War. There are only two conditions--In Combat Operations or -- in CONUS-- Preparing for Combat Operations. Our near term mission is focused on the reconstitution of our personnel and equipment. This mission requires strong leadership and detailed planning--We must integrate new soldiers, reset our equipment and begin a new cycle of training. Veteran leaders and soldiers will leverage their Warrior Skills to develop realistic and challenging training plans which will focus on the basics and build to more complex collective Battle Tasks. Adopt a mentality to "Fight Tonight". We rarely pick the time when we are ordered to deploy. What is good training?--It is merely a rehearsal for combat--the more realistic the better.

c) Discipline is at the core of our profession. This Brigade has an enviable reputation for discipline. Discipline is the base for all that we do. We will have to rely on each other to do what is right. You can't train discipline upon arrival in theatre. Continue to instill in all leaders and soldiers a sense of duty and high standards to do what is supposed to be done--whether or not anyone is watching.

d) Safety is more than a slogan. The Army continues to lose too many great soldiers to accidents. Safety isn't "Admin"-- it is a combat multiplier. Too many accidents are the results of a lack of compliance or ill-discipline. This is leader business. We often emphasize safety in the field--but a great danger remains off duty. Know your subordinates! Train them to analyze situations and then make good decisions.

e) Be a Team Player. In order for this unit to succeed in peace and combat, every soldier of every MOS must contribute. When all of us work towards one goal we are unstoppable. Good units share information and lessons learned. Units are not in competition with one another. The measuring stick is the Army standard.

f) Non Commissioned Officers are the cornerstone of this unit. I empower NCO's to make things happen. They know the standards and enforce them. They never walk past a mistake--they make corrections/ train and carry on. They lead the way in the most professional Army in the world. Every Devil Brigade soldier has a Sergeant!

g) Maintenance is in our Blood! Maintenance is what makes mechanized units survive. Our unit is centered on 1000s of pieces of equipment--all require disciplined checks and services. It is a never-ending process. I expect leaders to spend considerable energy on their maintenance program. Now is the time and place to identify and fix broken equipment. Good maintenance doesn't just happen--it too requires resources, planning and disciplined execution.

h) Marksmanship! We know from combat that all soldiers must be lethal and comfortable handling small arms. Incorporate lessons learned in combat. Train your soldiers under realistic conditions to achieve competence and confidence. I expect small arms live fire to be a center piece of regeneration training-starting with the individual and building to the unit. Additionally-Now –is the time to repair NMC weapons!

i) Physical Training (PT) is Combat Training. Combat is physically and mentally demanding. The best preparation is to be physically tough. “Reconstitute” yourself and your soldiers. Challenge yourself to set goals to build back to high levels of fitness and stamina. Leaders adapt your PT programs to be interesting and relevant. I also highly encourage participation in MWR organized sports programs. Many soldiers missed out on this competition-now is a great time to start.

j) Rehearsals are Critical. Combat experience has shown us that rehearsals remain a key to understanding mission and intent. Focus on conducting effective rehearsals and train subordinates on how to execute the full range of rehearsals--from a simple brief back to a full-up mounted rehearsal. The success or failure of any mission is often traced to the rehearsal.

k) We take care of our own. Army life is unlike anything in the civilian world. Although we often face adverse conditions, we know that we are never alone. We will take care of each other. There is always help available if needed. Our families are our most important bond and all soldiers must know that their family will be taken care of-especially when we deploy. I expect to have a positive and active sponsorship program. The first few days in a unit makes a big impression.

l) Maintain clear and concise communications. The hallmark of a good unit is crisp, clear SPOT Reports. From soldier to squad to battalion and brigade-keep higher informed. In garrison-I expect good communications with subordinates. Talk to soldiers and keep them informed. I fully expect that all leaders will conduct counseling on a regular basis. All soldiers and leaders expect and desire feedback. Remember-I will need timely and accurate information to make sound decisions. Tell me good and bad news. Bad news doesn't get better with age. Always offer a recommendation so that we solve a problem and move on.

m) Pre Combat Checks and Pre Combat Inspections. It worked in combat –don't let this lesson learned be forgotten. It has always been a special emphasis area for me and I will look for how it is conducted.

n) Optimism is a Combat Multiplier! I don't have a “zero-defect” mentality. I want leaders and soldiers to have the desire to take charge and learn by doing. People make honest mistakes. Remain positive-have a sense of humor. Things will not always work the way they were planned. You can tell a lot from a unit (leaders) by the way they react to adversity. It is not what happens-it's what we do about it.

2. *No Mission Too Difficult, No Sacrifice Too Great--Duty First !*

BART HOWARD
COL, Armor
Commanding